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Tourism Provides Increased Economic Impact for Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS – New research about travel in Indiana reveals that more people are visiting Indiana and spending more money than in previous years. The study by D.K. Shifflet & Associates, commissioned by the Indiana Office of Tourism Development, analyzed travel trends for 2006 compared to a similar 2004 study. It shows that a record-high 62.8 million travelers visited the Hoosier state in 2006, an increase of 7 percent compared to 58.7 million travelers in 2004. Visitor spending also increased nearly 20 percent to \$9.86 billion dollars.

Two other important indicators also showed growth from 2004. The length of stay by visitors in Indiana increased more than 8 percent to 1.88 days per trip, and the number of travelers staying overnight increased by nearly three million.

“A strong travel and tourism industry creates economic development for Hoosier communities,” said Lt. Governor Becky Skillman. “We’re seeing excellent growth in Indiana tourism and we’ll work even harder to promote Indiana as a top travel destination in the Midwest.”

The largest segment of leisure travelers in Indiana is families with children. However, Indiana is also strong in attracting couples and the younger 18-34 year-old travelers. The top reasons people come to Indiana were to visit friends or relatives, for getaway weekends and for outdoor recreation.

Research conducted by Indianapolis-based Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc. (SMARI), shows that the “Restart Your Engines” slogan and marketing campaign continues to positively impact people’s awareness of Indiana as a travel destination. The increased awareness of “Restart Your Engines” has improved Indiana’s image on every attribute, including being a place that is considered fun, relaxing and full of places to discover.

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The SMARI study also revealed that visitors who traveled to Indiana and were familiar with Indiana's tourism advertising stayed longer and spent more money.

"This latest research reveals solid growth overall for Indiana tourism," said Amy Vaughan, director of the Indiana Office of Tourism Development. "This is very encouraging and definitely shows we're moving in the right direction."

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Lt. Governor Becky Skillman oversees the Indiana Office of Tourism Development. Amy Vaughan serves as the agency's Director.